

GNASHING TEETH

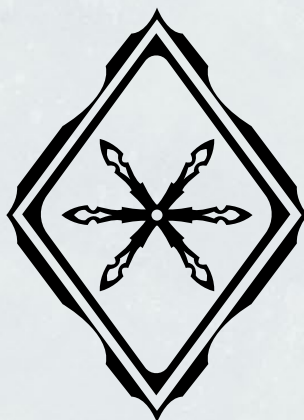
A Plague of Ancients Adventure

The goliaths of Wyrmdoom Crag are a proud, but thankfully, generous people. Having provided you with shelter from the deadly wilds of Icewind Dale, they've asked you to look into the strange things that've been happening in and around their home.

Part Two of the *Plague of Ancients* Series of Adventures.

A Four-Hour Adventure for 1st- and 2nd-Level Characters

Optimized for APL 3.



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ADVENTURE PRIMER

"When you spend so long trapped in darkness, you find that the darkness begins to stare back."

—Sarah J. Maas, *A Court of Mist and Fury*

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 1st- to 4th-level characters** and is optimized for **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 3**. Characters outside this level range can't participate in this adventure.

The adventure takes place high in the Spine of the World mountain range, between the Reghed Glacier and the Ten-Towns of Icewind Dale.

BACKGROUND

ICEWIND DALE, the frigid expanse north of the **SPINE OF THE WORLD**, is deep in the grip of the **EVERLASTING RIME**—a name bestowed upon the wrath of **AURIL THE FROSTMAIDEN**. Denied the sun's warmth, the people of **TEN-TOWNS**, the **GOLIATH CLANS**, and the **REGHED NOMADS** in the surrounding wilds, huddle near their fires to drive away the cold, hoping they'll be able to endure the chill until the sun rises once more.

Unbeknownst to them however, the cold is the least of their concerns. Among the **THUUNLAKALAGA** clan—the goliaths of **WYRMDOOM CRAG**—the druid **FERAL-TONGUE** has gone missing, and in his absence, beasts infused with **CHARDALYN** are driving away prey and fomenting madness in the minds of the people they encounter.

All is not yet lost; **OLD GOAT**, the leader of the Thuunlakalaga clan anticipates a sign. Salvation will be heralded by a **FALLING STAR** on the distant horizon, an ember of hope to melt away the icy grip of doubt in her heart.

OVERVIEW

The adventure's story is spread over **four parts** and takes approximately **4 hours** to play:

Call to Action: The Ask (10 mins). The characters meet Old Goat and Kaskur Spearsong, share stories around the fire, and are asked to visit Rikuur Hideminder.

Part 1: Hideminder (50 mins). The characters visit Rikuur, who informs them that several of the clan's goats have gone missing recently. While helping him tend the herd, one goat leads them on a merry chase with a grisly end. This is **Story Objective A**.

Part 2: Trapped Under Ice (60 mins). The characters accompany Kaskur on a trek through the wilderness to check on the reclusive goliath Kugan Windwhisper. They're ambushed while attempting to cross a frozen river and must save Kaskur from an icy doom. This is **Story Objective B**.

Part 3: The Grove (60 mins). Desperate for warmth, the party must find a way to bypass an ancient shrine's wards to gain access to its life-saving warmth. How long dare they stay? This is **Story Objective C**.

Part 4: Pack Hunters (60 mins). As the characters race the wind to reach the safety of Wyrmdoom Crag before a blizzard engulfs the region, they're ambushed by the wolves that've shadowed them throughout their journey. They must battle both the elements and the wolves at once if they're to survive the night. This is **Story Objective D**.



STORY AWARDS

At certain points in the adventure, you'll see this glyph along with an entry describing how the specified story award is earned or impacted by the story. Ignore the entry if it refers to a story award none of the characters have. If it refers to a story award the characters just earned, it provides information for you and the players.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

In addition to the characters' individual backgrounds, the following hooks are possible ways to involve the adventurers in this scenario. Useful if you have players who are unsure why their characters are here:

Caravan Refugee. With their caravan destroyed and the trade routes blocked by avalanches, the characters are now refugees trying to find their way to civilization.

Dire Portents. Characters with ties to the divine or arcane have received visions of unusual goings-on in Icewind Dale, which is deep within the grasp of an unusually long, deep winter called the Everlasting Rime.

The Great Hunt. Characters who prefer the wilder parts of the world have heard rumors of unusually cunning beasts wandering the wilds of Icewind Dale and may be seeking them out for a challenge, or to investigate them.

NARRATING FROSTCLAW, THE HUNTER

Though they only directly encounter her twice, the characters are constantly hunted by the awakened owlbear as the story arc develops. To ensure you instill the appropriate sense of paranoia and dread this villain deserves, leave signs of her passage for the characters to encounter as they adventure beyond the safety of Wyrmdoom Crag. Examples include:

- A large, white feather, stained with blood.
- The mutilated carcass of a beast or a missing goliath hunter.
- Large paw prints that're quickly erased by the wind and snow.
- A dead tree with huge claw marks gouged into the trunk.
- Growls and roars; their source obscured by blowing snow.
- A circular pattern of deliberately arranged body parts.

CALL TO ACTION: THE ASK

Estimated Duration: 10 minutes

GREAT HALL

Themes: Isolation, paranoia, and secrecy.

Ogolai (Old Goat) asks the characters to visit Rikuur, who's been whispering about strange goings-on in the area.

CHARACTER INTRODUCTIONS

Allow each player a few minutes to introduce their character, describe their appearance and mannerisms, and the reason they came to Icewind Dale. Encourage the characters to develop bonds by asking them to describe one positive interaction or event that occurred between their character and one other at the table. Character introductions provide a solid foundation for roleplaying opportunities and give you, the DM, hints as to which game elements will be most attractive to your players.

Award **inspiration** once everyone's had a turn.

Players begin the adventure having spent the last few days lost and alone in the frigid wilderness. Fortunately, Suuk, a friendly **Thuunlakalaga** clan hunter, found the group and invited them to **Wyrmdoom Crag** for a much-needed respite.

Leaving the biting cold and Suuk behind (they don't want to bump into Old Goat), you're escorted into a large cavern bustling with activity. You're seated near the fire and handed a bowl of warm, rich stew. A venerable goliath puffs on a long pipe while she watches you with intense curiosity.

AREA INFORMATION

Wyrmdoom Crag has the following features:

Dimensions and Terrain. Most chambers in Wyrmdoom Crag are carved natural stone, worn smooth in places by years of use. Ceilings are between 10 and 15 feet high. The feast hall is 80 feet long, with a rectangular firepit in the middle of the cavern.

Temperature. The caves are stiflingly warm with the occasional frigid draft.

Light. The firepit and oil lamps brightly light the hall, but cast deep, moving shadows.

Sounds and Smells. Crackling fires, bubbling stew, sweat, and damp leather. The room is filled with constant chatter as the tribe go about their daily lives.

CREATURE INFORMATION

A number of goliath adults and children are here, mostly seated around the firepit or tending to the meal. A matronly goliath stands at the far end of the room: **Ogolai Orcsplitter** ("Old Goat"), the clan's chieftain. As she considers how the outsiders might help her and the clan, she's approached by **Kaskur Spearsong**, one of the clan's hunters. Their discussion quickly devolves into a loud, heated argument (see their sidebars).

OGOLAI (OH GO LIE) ORCSPLITTER "OLD GOAT"

THUUNLAKALAGA

Lawful neutral goliath warrior

The chieftain of the Thuunlakalaga goliaths is an elderly goliath with a heavily scarred face. She dresses plainly in goat hide clothing and carries an immense greataxe fashioned from white dragon bone. She has a crippling fear of griffons stemming from a childhood trauma that's created tensions between her clan and the Akannathi goliaths of Skytower Shelter (see *Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden*).

What They Want. Old Goat's first priority is the safety and prosperity of her clan—especially in these unusual and trying times. She's quick to stymie dissent, particularly from Kaskur Spearsong. She fears his disagreements will turn violent, but does everything within her power to delay this apparent inevitability for as long as possible.

Done It, Seen It; but the End Is Nigh. Old Goat's been around a long time and seen many things. This experience lends her a tremendous amount of wisdom to draw on when making decisions. However, she's getting old and refuses to surrender the yoke of leadership until a worthy (equally wise) replacement is found. If it weren't for his sharp tongue, Old Goat would've offered Kaskur the mantle of leadership years ago. However, she fears what the clan would become under his leadership.

KASKUR (KASS KERR) SPEARSONG THUUNLAKALAGA

Neutral goliath warrior

This headstrong and impetuous goliath leads the clan's hunters. He's grown angry and frustrated at the lack of game in the area, and he resents Old Goat's "poor leadership" for a lack of solutions. He wields a longbow taller than most humans and claims he once felled an elk from a half mile away. He wears little in the way of clothing, even in the driving wind—a feat that's earned him the respect of his fellow hunters.

What They Want. Kaskur's grown tired of Old Goat's personal fears preventing an alliance with the goliaths of Skytower Shelter. He views her as weak and her ideas as outdated, especially when Kugan Windwhisper (Feral-Tongue)—who Kaskur views as even weaker than Old Goat—is involved. He wants to usurp control of the clan for himself.

Words Are Wasted Wind. Kaskur doesn't have a negotiator's tongue; he's terse and speaks his mind without hesitation. Despite this, he's experienced and knows the area better than any of his peers.



Their argument follows a familiar pattern—Old Goat urges caution while Kaskur urges change. Despite their resources already being stretched thin, Old Goat believes the characters can help the clan in their time of need and hopes being generous with their meager supplies will secure the characters' aid. Kaskur thinks it foolish to waste what little they have on outsiders. His tone makes it plain he's lost all patience with Old Goat.

She finally silences Kaskur with a withering shout, and he storms out the feast hall.

Old Goat greets the characters and shares her skin of fermented goat's milk with them. Encourage the characters to tell the tale of how they found their way to Wyrmdoom Crag. After the meal, the clan shares their own stories; telling tales of heartbreak and triumph. Give the players

Handout 1: Thuunlakalaga Tales and read the following:

After most people have finished eating, Old Goat raises a hand and a hush falls over the tribe. An elderly goliath begins a slow drumbeat, and the goliaths look at each other, expectantly. Finally, one takes a large swig of fermented goat's milk, clears their throat, and begins to speak in a hypnotic, rolling cadence.

A SIMPLE REQUEST

Once they've had their fill and heard the clan's stories, Old Goat offers the characters a place to sleep by the fire. Despite the hard ground, the hall is warm and comfortable.

In the morning, Old Goat asks for their aid. She plans to send out a search party for their missing hunters but doing so leaves **Rikuur Hideminder** unattended. With the reports of bizarre predator activity in the area, this makes her nervous to say the least. She asks the party to visit Rikuur and lend him a hand.

WINTER SURVIVAL GEAR

While characters playing *Icwind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden* begin play with cold weather clothing, others may not. The clan doesn't have much in the way of supplies, but characters can (and likely should) purchase winter survival gear (see *Icwind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden*) from the goliaths, as follows:

Item	Cost	Weight
Clothing, cold weather	10 gp	5 lb.
Crampons (2)	2 gp	1/4 lb.
Snowshoes	2 gp	4 lb.

Cold Weather Clothing. This outfit consists of a heavy fur coat or cloak over layers of wool clothing, as well as a fur-lined hat or hood, goggles, and fur-lined leather boots and gloves. As long as cold weather clothing remains dry, it's wearer automatically succeeds on saving throws against the effects of extreme cold.

Crampons. A crampon is a metal plate with spikes that is strapped to the sole of a boot. A creature wearing crampons can't fall prone while moving across slippery ice.

Snowshoes. Snowshoes reduce the likelihood of their wearer getting stuck in deep snow.

HIDEMINDER

Estimated Duration: 50 minutes

RIKUUR'S MEADOW

Themes: Isolation, paranoia, and secrecy.

The characters visit Rikuur Hideminder, who informs them of the clan's dwindling food supplies and the number of dead creatures that've been found nearby. He asks for the characters' help with chores, and a terrified goat leads them on a harrowing chase. Afterward, the characters find a mutilated goat that was likely killed by a pack of wolves.

STORY OBJECTIVE A

Assisting Rikuur with his goats is **Story Objective A**.

AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features:

Time. Early morning.

Dimensions and Terrain. A steep-sided ravine sheltered from the wind by the mountain's bulk.

Temperature. Extreme cold (see the sidebar).

Light. The nights in Icewind Dale are long (especially during the grip of the Everlasting Rime) and the utter darkness is broken only by a few hours of dim twilight—usually between late morning and early evening—and the auroras that streak across the sky.

LIGHTING IN ICEWIND DALE

Unless otherwise noted in the adventure, daytime hours provide dim light outdoors, while nighttime hours are dark. The permanent dusk of Auril's curse makes the promise of sunlight seem a teasing possibility, but the sun never breaks the horizon.

Sounds. With little wind and a gentle snowfall, the area is preternaturally quiet.

Weather. Heavy, gray skies threaten to turn the light snowfall into something much more dangerous.

EXTREME COLD

Whenever the temperature is at or below 0 degrees Fahrenheit, a creature exposed to the cold must make a successful DC 10 Constitution saving throw at the end of each hour or gain one level of exhaustion. Creatures with resistance or immunity to cold damage automatically succeed on the saving throw, as do creatures wearing **dry** cold weather gear (thick coats, gloves, and the like) and creatures naturally adapted to cold climates.

CREATURE INFORMATION

Rikuur Hideminder, an older goliath in thick furs, uses a crook to prod a nearby **mountain goat** who bleats in protest and bounds away.

RIKUUR (RICK ERR) HIDEMINDER THUUNLAKALAGA

Neutral goliath commoner

The clan's shepherd is an introvert. He's strong—even for a goliath; years of working the mountain terrain with the goats has left Rikuur incredibly toned without bulky muscle. His arms and legs are well-defined from rock climbing and caring for the herd. Rikuur is one of Kaskur Spearsong's more vocal opponents—he finds the idea of the hunter running the clan off-putting. Wisps of goat hair seem to appear in Rikuur's wake.

What They Want. Rikuur wants to make sure the clan is protected and fed. Part of why he likes being a shepherd so much is that the goats are another herd he can guard from a distance. Rikuur would risk his life to defend them.

Totes Ma Goats. Rikuur is reclusive and tries not to create conflict for the clan's leadership. That said, Rikuur would defend the clan from within or without in a heartbeat. The clan is as much the herd Rikuur shepherds as the goats are.

Rikuur wastes no time in asking the characters to lend a hand with milking the goats, allowing the more experienced tribesmen to search for the missing hunting party. Finding the goats is easy but milking them isn't. Rounding up a handful of goats, Rikuur gives the characters a cursory demonstration of how they're milked, jerks a thumb at a number of empty buckets, and then leaves them to their work while calling the remaining goats down from the cliffs for their turns.

GOT MILK?

Allow players to describe how they attempt to milk the goats—using whatever ability best suits their strategy; Dexterity to surprise the goat with a deft move, Strength to hold the goat firmly while milking, Wisdom to calm the animal first, etc. No matter their choice, characters proficient in Animal Handling add their proficiency bonus to the roll. Regardless of what they try, a successful DC 13 ability check is required to milk the goat.

Failure has comical results—the goat escapes, the milk spills all over the character, etc. This isn't a problem at first, but milk soaking into the character's cold weather clothing could cause serious problems later (see the **Extreme Cold** sidebar).

HONEY, COME BACK!

Regardless of how the characters fare at their chore, read or paraphrase the following once they've had a go at it:

While most of the goats tolerate your presence, a tawny-coated goat named Honey refuses to let anyone near her. Rikuur seems unconcerned until the lonely howl of a wolf echoes through the air, causing the herd to climb for safety and Honey to bolt for the woods.

Rikuur has his hands full with the rest of the herd and can't go after Honey himself. He warns the characters that she isn't safe on her own, and the tribe can't afford to lose any more goats. They must catch her!

BEGINNING THE CHASE

Honey (a **mountain goat**) bolts toward a thick copse of trees. Use the chase rules in chapter 8 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. Honey begins the chase 60 feet ahead of the characters. She acts on initiative count 20 (losing ties), moving her full speed away from the nearest character. She only takes the Dash action if the characters are 60 feet or less away from her. Use the table below, which applies to each character involved in the chase. The specified ability checks are just suggestions; work with the characters if they want to do something else, and reward creativity accordingly.

The rocky and snowy terrain here is treacherous—the heroes must be careful or risk injury. Characters who use the Dash action have **disadvantage** on any ability check or saving throw caused by a complication at the end of their turn.

At the **start** of a character's turn, if Honey is more than 60 feet ahead of them, she's totally obscured by snow and trees, and the character suffers a complication at the **end** of their turn—use the Chase Complications table below to determine what happens:

CHASE COMPLICATIONS

d10	Complication
1	Your path is blocked by a crevasse which you can jump across with a successful DC 11 Strength (Athletics) check. On a failure, you land awkwardly, reducing your speed by half until the end of your next turn.
2	You encounter a deep pit filled with slush and must make a successful DC 11 Dexterity saving throw or fall into the frigid pit—gaining a level of exhaustion that can only be removed by completing a long rest someplace warm and dry. If your clothing was soaked with goat's milk, you have disadvantage on the saving throw.
3	A sudden drop catches you by surprise. You must make a successful DC 11 Dexterity saving throw or fall into a 20-foot-deep pit.
4	You must traverse a steep hillside covered with scree (loose stones) and scramble to avoid sliding down the slope. Make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or use 10 feet of movement (your choice) to keep your footing. On a failed save, you lose your footing and take 5 (1d10) slashing damage from the sharp rocks.
5	A wolf leaps from the nearby undergrowth and snaps at the character (+4 to hit) before retreating back into cover (this movement doesn't provoke opportunity attacks). On a hit, the wolf deals 7 (2d4 + 2) piercing damage and the character must make a successful DC 11 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.
6–10	No complication.





ENDING THE CHASE

The chase ends if a character ends their turn within 5 feet of Honey, or if Honey starts her turn 120 feet away from the nearest character. No matter how they try, it's unlikely the characters will catch Honey—this is her turf.

A GRISLY END

If Honey gets away, the characters come across her remains a few minutes after the chase ends. If they manage to catch her, they instead encounter one of the clan's other goats while returning to Rikuur. When they do, read or paraphrase the following:

The steaming carcass of a goat hangs from a stout tree, impaled on the stump of a thick branch. It's been crudely disemboweled, with blood splattered in wild streaks across the fresh snow. The intestines are nowhere to be found.

A casual search of the area (no check required) reveals a number of tracks surrounding the remains. A successful DC 11 Wisdom (Survival) check identifies them as wolf prints, though some are much larger than others—a dire wolf or bear perhaps? In addition, the players find a large snowy-white feather, splattered with blood.

TREASURE

Crestfallen, Rikuur asks the characters to return the milk and meat to Wyrmdoom Crag. Before they leave, he tosses them the brass and silver bell from around the goat's neck—it may be worth a few coins to the right buyer and he has no need of it anymore.

DEVELOPMENT

The characters return to Wyrmdoom Crag with the milk and meat. Old Goat is dismayed at losing another goat—an opportunity Kaskur capitalizes upon with scoffs and a few choice words before storming off with a handful of his hunters in tow.

At this point, the characters may take a short rest. Upon completing it, Old Goat asks the characters to join Kaskur and check in on **Kugan Windwhisper**, one of the clan's druids, who lives near a sacred hot spring deep in the wilds; the druid hasn't been heard from in a few tendays and Old Goat's worried about him. Kaskur does little to hide his displeasure at being forced to tend to helpless outsiders but doesn't openly defy Old Goat. He gives them little time to prepare before insisting they leave—an attempt to show the clan Old Goat's faith in them is ill-placed.

TRAPPED UNDER ICE

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

ICEWIND DALE

Themes: Fear, desperation, and helplessness.

The characters speak with Kaskur Spearsong, a headstrong, but respected member of the clan. Kaskur has been sent to check on a reclusive goliath druid named Kugan Windwhisper. The characters are to accompany him to the druid's grove in the wilds outside of Wyrmdoom Crag.

Along the way, the party are waylaid by elementals, and must bargain with an odd guardian to enter the grove. Once inside, they learn the druid has adopted a new name: Feral-Tongue.

STORY OBJECTIVE B

Surviving the journey to Kugan's homestead is **Story Objective B**.

AREA INFORMATION

The river-carved valley on the way to Kugan's homestead has the following features:

Dimensions and Terrain. The valley is long and narrow with steep, rocky sides. A frozen **river** snakes along the valley floor. The bottom of the valley is shrouded in mist.

Temperature. Extreme cold (See the sidebar).

Light. The nights in Icewind Dale are long (especially during the grip of the Everlasting Rime) and the utter darkness is broken only by a few hours of twilight at midday and the auroras that streak across the sky after midnight. This lack of daylight and the tall walls blanket the valley in darkness.

Sounds. The dull roar of open water flowing over rapids can be heard downstream.

Weather. Fast-moving, dark-gray clouds fill the sky; a terrible storm is gathering.

River. The river is largely frozen over, but there are patches of thin ice and open water where the current is strongest.

TRAVELLING WITH KASKUR

Kaskur is taciturn during the three-hour journey from Wyrmdoom Crag to Kugan's shrine; he resents being sent on such a trivial errand when he should be out looking for the missing hunters or gathering food for the tribe. Eventually, his mood softens somewhat, and he offers the characters insight into his disagreements with Old Goat. Though he'll talk to any character, he clearly only respects those who are strong and able to tolerate the cold.

He explains to anyone who'll listen that Old Goat is too set in her ways, too cautious and too fearful to lead the tribe out of their current predicament. As an example, he tells them he's their best hunter by far—he once felled an elk from a half mile away—but Old Goat thinks it wiser for him to go hiking with outsiders rather than to feed the tribe. Another is that she refuses to make peace with the Akannathi clan of Skytower Shelter. They hunt from griffon back, and as such have a much larger hunting area than the Thuunlakalaga.

He tells the characters that he doesn't like the look of the sky. Rather than take the usual path, he takes a shortcut through a steep river valley lest they be caught in the open on the way home.

THE FROZEN RIVER

As the characters draw closer to the river, Kaskur moves with uncharacteristic caution and issues a curt warning to the characters: he must travel ahead of them as they cross so he can test the ice. He strings his bow across his chest and readies to traverse the ice. He recklessly refuses any assistance the characters might offer. If they attempt to delay him, he glances at the sky and insists there's no time for foolishness and starts across.

Allow the party to discuss their next move and encourage them to describe what they're doing as they cross the ice. Once they do, read the following:

You're most of the way across when enormous toad explodes through the ice. Kaskur plunges into the frigid torrent and disappears under the ice. You catch a brief glimpse of him as he's swept downstream, but you have more immediate concerns as the toad leaps toward you.

The river is mostly frozen over, with dangerous patches of thin ice dotted around. The ice is difficult terrain and when a creature takes the Dash action, they must make a successful DC 11 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check or fall prone. The thin ice, however, is the true peril here. Spotting a patch of thin ice requires a successful DC 11 Wisdom (Survival) check—made with disadvantage due to the light dusting of snow on the frozen river. If more than 40 lb. is placed on a 5-foot-square section of thin ice, the ice breaks, plunging anything in the area into the river beneath. Creatures that succeed on a DC 11 Dexterity saving throw avoid falling in.

Falling through the ice is extremely dangerous; a creature who falls through is immediately swept downstream (under the ice) at a rate of 20 feet per round unless they have a swim speed of 20 feet or more. If the creature is tied to someone, things get more complicated: Whenever a creature would be swept downstream, any **characters tied to them** must make a DC 13 group Strength (Athletics) check. On a success, the creature isn't swept downstream. On a failure, the creature is only swept 10 feet away, but the characters they're tied to are dragged 10 feet closer to the hole. (This represents the group losing both ground and rope slack to the current.)

After traveling 400 feet downstream, characters reach a long stretch of open water, at which point they must make a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check to grab onto the rocks and climb out the water.

A creature can be immersed in frigid water for a number of minutes equal to (1 + its Constitution bonus) before suffering any ill effects. For each additional minute spent in frigid water, the creature must make a successful DC 10 Constitution saving throw or gain a level of exhaustion. Creatures with resistance or immunity to cold damage automatically succeed on the saving throw.

Just as thin ice can be their doom, so, too can it be their salvation. As an action, a character can search for thin ice from below using the same DC as spotting it from above. If successful, they spot thin ice and can burst through it as a reaction. Once they've burst through the ice, they can climb out with a successful DC 11 Strength (Athletics) check.

CREATURE INFORMATION

This part of the river is home to an **ice toad**, whom Frostclaw corrupted and ordered to attack anyone who attempts to cross the river. She's assigned three **ice mephits** to help it guard this portion of the river.

ADJUSTING THIS ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These aren't cumulative:

Very Weak: Remove two **ice mephits**.

Weak: Remove one **ice mephit**.

Strong: Add one **ice mephit**.

Very Strong: Replace one **ice toad** with one **giant ice toad**.

The mephits use their False Appearance ability to lay in wait until the ice toad attacks and ambush the party from behind. They fly into the air and attack from above so they can catch as many characters as possible with their Frost Breath, and try to keep them from reaching the shore. The toad and the mephits fight to the death.

DEVELOPMENT

After defeating the creatures, the sound of open water and rapids downriver snaps the characters back to reality. Traveling 400 feet to the rapids, they find Kaskur clinging to a rock in the middle of the river, clearly exhausted and suffering from hypothermia (he has two levels of exhaustion). He needs help quickly or he may not survive the night. He suffers these effects even if the characters manage to pull him from the water before he reaches the rapids. Fortunately, Kugan's homestead and the sacred hot spring aren't far away.



As the characters make their way to the sacred shrine, they notice a large wolf on the far side of the river watching them intently. It disappears into the trees once observed.

TREASURE

The toad has gathered all sorts of baubles from hapless travelers. Most of these have been partially digested and are now worthless, but the party finds several delicate bone masks with intricate markings on them. A successful DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check identifies these as chwinga masks. Someone in the clan will likely pay well for them.

If they saved him, Kaskur gives the characters a *potion of healing* and a *potion of water breathing* (he had two, but drank one while underwater).

LETTING KASKUR DIE

Some players might suggest letting Kaskur die rather than save him from the river. They might justify this as a way to eliminate tension in the tribe, or they might not have bonded with him during the trip to the river. Remind the players that the clan was very upset when they lost Honey the goat and would be absolutely furious if they were associated with the death of the clan's greatest hunter. Further, they don't know the way to Kugan's shrine, and need him to complete their mission.

Characters who don't make an effort to save Kaskur gain the **On Thin Ice** story award.



STORY AWARD: ON THIN ICE

The characters earn this story award if they do nothing to save Kaskur Spearsong.

THE GROVE

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

A DEAL WITH “THE DRAGON KEEPER”

Themes: Fear, desperation, and secrets.

Kugan Windwhisper's yurt lies within a sacred druidic shrine, high in the mountains near Wyrmdoom Crag. Upon arriving, the characters find their passage into the shrine blocked by magic. Time is against the party as both the weather and a pack of wolves close in on them. They must negotiate with a greedy mephit to gain entry. Once inside, the characters discover a journal detailing the druid's discovery of a chardalyn staff and his subsequent descent into madness—culminating in his assumption of the name Feral-Tongue.

STORY OBJECTIVE C

Investigating the hidden grove is **Story Objective C**.



AREA INFORMATION

Kugan's homestead has the following features:

Dimensions and Terrain. A steep slope leads to the top of a dormant volcano. A narrow **lava tube** provides access to a **crater** sheltering a hidden **grove**, which contains a bubbling **hot spring** and a druidic shrine (see Dragonmaw Spring, below).

Temperature. Extreme cold outside the shrine. Inside the shrine, it's well above freezing in all but the worst weather.

Sounds. Howling wind, bubbling mud, and the muffled growl of a boiling hot spring deep in a cave.

Footprints. The ground outside the shrine is littered with animal footprints—which a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Survival) check identifies as wolf prints. Some are much larger than others though.

Mud Pool. A deep pool of acidic, gray mud seeps out of a fumarole in the cliff wall.

CREATURE INFORMATION

Acidic water from deep within the mountain has dissolved the rock into a steaming puddle of gray mud just outside the grove's entrance. **Clod, “the Dragon Keeper”** (a **mud mephit** fluent in Common) lounges lazily in the puddle, surrounded by an eclectic collection of muddy “treasures.” If he's present, **Kaskur** is unimpressed by the filthy creature, and suggests they fill it full of arrows and be done with it.

CLOD, “THE DRAGON KEEPER” (KLODD)

Like many of his ilk, Clod's more interested in comfort and possessions than combat. While he delights in many forms of torment, prefers to separate his victims from their valuables. He's especially fond of showing off his great wealth and telling grandiose stories about his “treasures.”

What They Want. Clod is a lazy, slovenly creature who cares little for anyone else's needs. He mocks and denigrates anyone he views as beneath him (which is virtually everyone) and flees from aggressors at the first sign of trouble.

Blinded by Greed. Though greedy, he isn't particularly smart and is quite gullible. He's inclined to believe most anything is valuable if it has an outlandish story to go with it—the grander the tale, the greater its worth, at least in his mind.

The shrine's entrance is protected by a powerful ward that prevents unwanted creatures from entering. There are a number of ways to bypass the ward (see Playing the Pillars, below).

As the characters struggle to find an entrance, a figure emerges from the mud, read the following in a gravelly voice:

"You're gonna need a few of these if you want to get in there. Make it worth my while and maybe we can make a deal!"

This is Clod, a greedy mud mephit who introduces himself as "the Dragon Keeper" and claims to be the shrine's guardian. He explains that you can only enter the shrine with a runestone, and he just happens to have all of them in his hoard. He's willing to make a deal, but the stones don't come cheap.

Playing the Pillars. You can make use of the following suggestions when running this encounter:

Combat. If the characters attack him, Clod shouts, "You're in for it now!" and disappears into the mud. The grove's real guardian is a **wood woad**, which stands in the lava tube and fights any creature that attempts to enter without a runestone. It fights to the death but won't leave the vicinity of the grove for any reason.

Exploration. A character can bring the ward down for 24 hours by casting a *dispel magic* spell on it. Alternately, they can bypass the ward through sheer force of will: To do so, they must make three successful DC 13 Wisdom saving throws in a row. If they fail, they can try again, but risk drawing the attention of the guardian with repeated attempts. However they manage to bypass the ward, anyone who attempts to enter the shrine without a runestone must still contend with the wood woad.

Social. Clod is willing to make a deal for the runestones. See "One Man's Junk," below.

ONE MAN'S JUNK

Clod's greed makes him particularly gullible; he's easily fooled into believing something is more valuable if there's an outlandish story to go with it. He has disadvantage on any checks to discern an item's value.

Clod is willing to trade a runestone for "their most treasured possession." While the players decide what to trade him, Clod brags about some of his "treasures." You should create a list of junk items and attach unbelievable tales to them. Each time you share one of these tales, have the characters make a DC 11 Intelligence (Investigation) check. On a success, they realize that his baubles are worthless, and he's been duped by clever stories. Players should be encouraged to make up their own outrageous stories to go with their gifts to him.

Poor Clod believes the runestones are worthless junk and takes a perverse pleasure in the scam he's running. As soon as the players enter the shrine, Clod hops out of his pool and gathers up the runestones so he can sell them again. A character who obtains Clod's runestone through trade gains the **One Man's Junk** story award.



STORY AWARDS: ONE MAN'S JUNK

The characters earn this story award if they convince Clod, "the Dragon Keeper" that a worthless bauble was actually a valuable treasure.

DRAGONMAW SPRING

When the characters exit the lava tube, give the players

Handout 2: Dragonmaw Spring. This lush grove is nestled inside the crater of a long-dormant volcano, warmed by a series of **fumaroles** and a gurgling **hot spring**. The powerful enchantments that protect the shrine also protect the plant life within the grove. Normally, it's sufficient to keep the trees green and lush all year round, but it's clear the harsh winter and reduced daylight has begun to take its toll.

A modest **yurt** covered in animal hides is nestled under a large oak tree. An **altar** of living wood sits nearby, and a sturdy book bound in leather rests on the altar. Behind the trees is a shallow basin of steaming water leading back to a deep cave in the crater wall. Water and steam bubble and hiss from the cave, echoing and rumbling like the growl of a great beast.

AREA INFORMATION

The grove has the following features:

Dimensions and Terrain. The lava tube leads to a deep crater—nearly 100 feet across—filled with a thick growth of moss and ferns, as well as a number of oak trees. The crater walls are steep, rising 30 to 40 feet to the open sky.

Temperature. The grove is warm and humid. Characters suffering from exhaustion due to exposure can find relief here provided they complete a long rest.

Visibility. The crater is open to the sky, but it offers little illumination during the Everlasting Rime. The entire grove is filled with thin mist from the spring.

Spring. A shallow basin of water rests in the center of the grove. Wisps of steam rise from the pool.

Fumaroles. The sounds of gurgling water and bursts of air emanate from dozens of natural steam vents in the crater wall—each carved to resemble a face with an open mouth.

Dragonmaw Cave. The pool flows from a conical cave in the crater wall. Deep inside the cave, the water boils, sputters, and belches steam, echoing off the cave wall—lending the impression of a dragon's growls and roars. If a creature listens to the sounds emitted from the cave, they come tantalizingly close to forming words in Primordial—something characters fluent in the language notice. Unbeknownst to the characters, druids used to journey here to meditate upon the mouths; listening for hours on end in an attempt to derive meaning from the sounds.

Altar. The wooden altar wasn't carved, but rather a tree was coaxed and tended into this shape. A sturdy **book** bound in thick leather rests atop the altar.

Journal. The book on the altar is Feral-Tongue's journal—abandoned after his sanity withered away. Primarily an almanac, it details the comings and goings of the seasons, describing the region's animal populations and noting special events. Scrawled in the margins in an increasingly erratic hand, several notes stand out. Give the players

Handout 3: Kugan's Journal.

TREASURE

Kugan's yurt contains bundles of medicinal herbs and other items that may be of value to the Thuunlakalaga clan. There's also a scrimshaw necklace carved into the shape of an owlbear rearing up on its hind legs tucked into the journal.

PACK HUNTERS

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

OF MEAT AND MURDER

Themes: Fear, desperation, paranoia.

As the characters conclude their investigations from the earlier parts of this adventure, they're caught in a powerful blizzard and simultaneously attacked by a pack of wolves led by Channon, a winter wolf. While none of the wolves are awakened, they've all been corrupted by the chardalyn staff.

STORY OBJECTIVE D

Defeating Channon and her wolves is **Story Objective D**.

AREA INFORMATION

This section occurs on open terrain high in the mountains:

Dimensions and Terrain. A boulder field high above the river valley that separates Dragonmaw Spring and Wyrmdoom Crag. The area is well above the tree line, with little (if any) overhead cover. The ground is broken, showing windswept rock in some places and deep snow in others.

Time. Early evening or morning.

Temperature. Extreme cold.

Light. None. Driving snow makes vision difficult (see Exploration).

Sounds. Deafening wind (see Exploration).

Weather. Strong, icy winds and ominous, dark clouds fill the sky until the blizzard strikes.

CREATURE INFORMATION

A pack of wolves has tracked the characters since they left Kugan's homestead.

You hear the familiar howl of wolves, first from the left, then the right, then behind you. It's as if they're herding you to a predetermined point. When you finally catch a glimpse of them, you can see their teeth and claws are as black as the night itself. One is twice the size of a human and in Common growls, "Meat . . . meat . . . meat . . ." as they approach!

Channon (a **winter wolf**) and four **wolves** break off from the pack and attack the characters. Channon's wolves (and **dire wolves** for strong or very strong parties) have the following modification:

- They deal an extra 1d6 cold damage with their Bite attack.

Kaskur looses arrow after arrow at the rest of the pack—his face showing concern for the first time since departing Wyrmdoom Crag.

CHANNON (CHAN-ON)

Neutral evil winter wolf

Though she isn't awakened like Frostclaw, she's thoroughly under the influence of Feral-Tongue's chardalyn staff. Vicious and cruel, Channon is a cunning hunter who prefers to toy with her prey before moving in for the kill.

What They Want. Channon doesn't understand exactly what's happened to Frostclaw, but she's smart enough to know the chardalyn staff made Frostclaw more powerful than any owlbear before her.

Savage Huntress. Channon lives for the thrill of the hunt and the rush of the kill. She'll gladly spend an hour carefully herding her prey to a killing field of her choosing, all the while savoring its terror as her pack surrounds it.

Channon, one of Feral-Tongue's underlings who's acting on Frostclaw's orders, was sent to the druid's homestead to recover his journal and destroy the residence in the hopes that the goliaths would give Kugan Windwhisper up for dead and so not suspect his role in recent goings-on (as Feral-Tongue). The wolves aren't awakened, only normal wolves she's brought under her sway.

Frostclaw instructed Channon to terrorize the Thuunlakalaga tribe, so Channon's been shadowing the party, debating how to kill them with the greatest impact on the tribe—she's settled on having them disappear in a blizzard only a few hundred yards from safety.

ADJUSTING THIS ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These aren't cumulative:

- **Very Weak:** Remove one **wolf**, and the wolves have no modifications.
- **Weak:** The **wolves** have no modifications.
- **Strong:** Replace one **wolf** with one **dire wolf**.
- **Very Strong:** Replace three **wolves** with three **dire wolves**.

Playing the Pillars. You can make use of the following suggestions when running this encounter:

Combat. Channon and the **wolves** capitalize on the obscurity granted by the weather to sneak up on the party—surprising the group if successful. Channon takes particular glee in using her Cold Breath to inflict suffering and likely reserves it for opportunities to attack two or more characters at once. The characters are likely to spread out once she's demonstrated its use, which plays to the wolves' natural instinct to gang up on



lightly armored foes separated from their colleagues. If her wolves are killed, Channon switches to hit-and-run tactics—using the weather for cover. Kaskur's actions aren't tracked as if he were an active combatant; describe him as firing on the wolves circling the scene at a distance—felling them with awe-inspiring precision (in spite of the wind and his flagging strength) before they can reinforce the wolves actively engaging the group.

Exploration. The wind imposes disadvantage on ranged weapon attack rolls and Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing. Further, the wind and snow extinguish open flames, disperse fog, erase tracks in the snow, and make flying by nonmagical means nearly impossible. A creature flying in the wind must land at the end of its turn or fall. During combat, at the end of their turn, any creature concentrating on a spell in a blizzard must make a successful DC 10 Constitution saving throw or lose concentration. Additionally, everything within the blizzard is lightly obscured. Creatures in the area have disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight, and visibility is limited to 30 feet.

Social. Channon's thirst for blood can't be slaked. The other **wolves**, however, are almost normal beasts (though made more aggressive and dangerous by chardalyn exposure); they may be driven off if presented with magic, fire, larger predatory animals, or if sufficiently wounded, etc.

DEVELOPMENT

Once the wolves are defeated, Kaskur (if present) wastes no time skinning and cleaning the animals for their meat and fur. Characters who assist him get a curt nod of approval, but their aid doesn't seem to do much to gain his respect.

TREASURE

Channon wears a crude necklace of bone and feathers given to her by Frostclaw.

WRAP-UP: SAFE AT LAST

Exhausted and half-frozen, the party finally makes their way to the safety of Wyrmdoom Crag. The missing hunting party returned the night before, and now Kaskur's home (if the characters abandoned him to his fate in the frozen river, he managed to save himself and beat the characters back to Wyrmdoom Crag), they're ready to celebrate their good fortune. A feast has been prepared for the whole tribe, of elk caught by the hunting party.

The winds outside howl long into the night as the goliaths celebrate the safe return of both groups. As the feast is winding down, a bloodcurdling scream comes from the entrance of the cave.

When the characters investigate, they find two goliath guards dead in the snow, their shredded bodies positioned either side of a crude Giant rune formed of goat entrails with a single bloody, white feather resting at the center. The rune reads "Soon."

TREASURE

In gratitude for their role in uncovering information about Feral-Tongue and his connection to Frostclaw, Old Goat provides the characters with a few pieces of knucklebone trout scrimshaw and a set of *sending stones*.



REWARDS

At the end of the session, everyone receives rewards based upon their accomplishments.

PLAYER REWARDS

The players earn the following rewards:

ADVANCEMENT

A character participating in this adventure gains one level.

OPTIONAL: DECLINING ADVANCEMENT

Each player can decline advancement if they so choose; this has its benefits. It's possible for a character to advance outside an adventure's level range, meaning they'd be unable to play an adventure as planned. Similarly, advancing too quickly means a character won't earn as much gold as their peers.

Conversely, remind them that the amount of gold their characters can earn per level is limited; characters declining advancement might reach a point where they no longer earn gold.

GOLD

Award each character gold for each hour of the session. Adventures typically features cues for this, but you can add it where you see fit. The maximum gold you can award a character per hour is determined by their tier, as follows:

Tier	Hourly GP Award	GP Limit per Level
1	20 gp	80 gp
2	30 gp	240 gp
3	200 gp	1,600 gp
4	750 gp	6,000 gp

MAGIC ITEMS

If found during the adventure, the characters can keep the following magic items; described in **handout 4**:

- *Potion of healing*
- *Potion of water breathing*
- *Sending stones*

STORY AWARDS

The characters may earn the following story awards; described in **handout 4**:

On Thin Ice

One Man's Junk

DUNGEON MASTER REWARDS

For running this adventure, you earn a DM Reward. See the *Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide* for more information.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

The following NPCs feature prominently in this adventure:

CHANNON (CHAN-IN)

Though she isn't awakened like Frostclaw, she's thoroughly under the influence of Feral-Tongue's chardalyn staff.

Vicious and cruel, Channon is a cunning hunter who prefers to toy with her prey before moving in for the kill.

What They Want. Channon doesn't understand exactly what's happened to Frostclaw, but she's smart enough to know the chardalyn staff made Frostclaw more powerful than any owlbear before her.

Savage Huntress. Channon lives for the thrill of the hunt and the rush of the kill. She'll gladly spend an hour carefully herding her prey to a killing field of her choosing, all the while savoring its terror as her pack surrounds it.

CLOD (KLOD), "THE DRAGON KEEPER"

Like many of his ilk, Clod's more interested in comfort and possessions than combat. While he delights in many forms of torment, prefers to separate his victims from their valuables. He's especially fond of showing off his great wealth and telling grandiose stories about his "treasures."

What They Want. Clod is a lazy, slovenly creature who cares little for anyone else's needs. He mocks and denigrates anyone he views as beneath him (which is virtually everyone) and flees from aggressors at the first sign of trouble.

Blinded by Greed. Though greedy, he isn't particularly smart and is quite gullible. He's inclined to believe most anything is valuable if it has an outlandish story to go with it—the grander the tale, the greater its worth, at least in his mind.

KASKUR (KASS-KERR) SPEARSONG THUUNLAKALAGA

This headstrong and impetuous goliath leads the clan's hunters. He's grown angry and frustrated at the lack of game in the area, and he resents Old Goat's "poor leadership" for a lack of solutions. He wields a longbow taller than most humans and claims he once felled an elk from a half mile away. He wears little in the way of clothing, even in the driving wind—a feat that's earned him the respect of his fellow hunters.

What They Want. Kaskur's grown tired of Old Goat's personal fears preventing an alliance with the goliaths of Skytower Shelter. He views her as weak and her ideas as outdated, especially when Kugan Windwhisper (Feral-Tongue)—who Kaskur views as being even weaker than Old Goat—is involved. He wants to usurp control of the clan for himself.

Words Are Wasted Wind. Kaskur doesn't have a negotiator's tongue; he's terse and speaks his mind without hesitation. Despite this, he's experienced and knows the area better than any of his peers.

OGOLAI (OH-GOH-LIE) ORCSPLITTER "OLD GOAT" THUUNLAKALAGA

The chieftain of the Thuunlakalaga goliaths is an elderly goliath with a heavily scarred face. She dresses plainly in goat hide clothing and carries an immense greataxe fashioned from white dragon bone. She has a crippling fear of griffons stemming from a childhood trauma that's created tensions between her clan and the Akannathi goliaths of Skytower Shelter (see *Icwind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden*).

What They Want. Old Goat's first priority is the safety and prosperity of her clan—especially in these unusual and trying times. She's quick to stymie dissent, particularly from Kaskur Spearsong. She fears his disagreements will turn violent but does everything within her power to delay this apparent inevitability for as long as possible.

Done It, Seen It; but the End Is Nigh. Old Goat's been around a long time and seen many things. This experience lends her a tremendous amount of wisdom to draw on when making decisions. However, she's getting old and refuses to surrender the yoke of leadership until a worthy (equally wise) replacement is found. If it weren't for his sharp tongue, Old Goat would've offered Kaskur the mantle of leadership years ago. However, she fears what the clan would become under his leadership.

RIKUR (RICK-ERR) HIDEMINDER THUUNLAKALAGA

The clan's shepherd is an introvert. He's strong—even for a goliath; years of working the mountain terrain with the goats has left Rikur incredibly toned without bulky muscle. His arms and legs are well-defined from rock climbing and caring for the herd. Rikur is one of Kaskur Spearsong's more vocal opponents—he finds the idea of the hunter running the clan off-putting. Wisps of goat hair seem to appear in Rikur's wake.

What They Want. Rikur wants to make sure the clan is protected and fed. Part of why he likes being a shepherd so much is that the goats are another herd he can guard from a distance. Rikur would risk his life to defend them.

Totes Ma Goats. Rikur is reclusive and tries not to create conflict for the clan's leadership. That said, he'd defend the clan from within or without in a heartbeat. The clan is as much the herd Rikur shepherds as the goats are.

CREATURE STATISTICS

The following creatures appear in this adventure:

DIRE WOLF

Large beast, unaligned

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 37 (5d10 + 10)

Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	15 (+2)	15 (+2)	3 (-4)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +4

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages —

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Keen Hearing and Smell. The wolf has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Pack Tactics. The wolf has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the wolf's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

CHANNON'S WOLVES

These wolves deal an extra 3 (1d6) cold damage with their Bite attack.

GIANT ICE TOAD

Large monstrosity, neutral

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 52 (7d10 + 14)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)

Damage Immunities cold

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Ice Toad

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Amphibious. The toad can breathe air and water.

Cold Aura. Any creature that starts its turn within 10 feet of the toad takes 5 (1d10) cold damage.

Standing Leap. The toad's long jump is up to 20 feet and its high jump is up to 10 feet, with or without a running start.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) piercing damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 13). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained and the toad can't bite another target.

Swallow. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one Medium or smaller creature the toad is grappling. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) piercing damage, the target is swallowed, and the grapple ends. The swallowed target is blinded and restrained, it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the toad, and it takes 10 (3d6) acid damage and 11 (2d10) cold damage at the start of each of the toad's turns. The toad can have only one target swallowed at a time.

If the toad dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse using 5 feet of movement, exiting prone.

ICE MEPHIT

Small elemental, neutral evil

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 21 (6d6)

Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (-2)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	9 (-1)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)

Skills Perception +2, Stealth +3

Damage Vulnerabilities bludgeoning, fire

Damage Immunities cold, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Aquan, Auran

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Death Burst. When the mephit dies, it explodes in a burst of jagged ice. Each creature within 5 feet of it must make a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw, taking 4 (1d8) slashing damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

False Appearance. While the mephit remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from an ordinary shard of ice.

Innate Spellcasting (1/Day). The mephit can innately cast *fog cloud*, requiring no material components. Its innate spellcasting ability is Charisma.

ACTIONS

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) slashing damage plus 2 (1d4) cold damage.

Frost Breath (Recharge 6). The mephit exhales a 15-foot cone of cold air. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw, taking 5 (2d4) cold damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

ICE TOAD

Medium monstrosity, neutral

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 32 (5d8 + 10)

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)

Skills Perception +2

Damage Immunities cold

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Ice Toad

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Amphibious. The toad can breathe air and water.

Cold Aura. Any creature that starts its turn within 5 feet of the toad takes 3 (1d6) cold damage.

Standing Leap. The toad's long jump is up to 20 feet and its high jump is up to 10 feet, with or without a running start.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature.

Hit: 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage plus 4 (1d8) cold damage. If the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it is grappled (escape DC 11). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained and the toad can't bite another target.

MOUNTAIN GOAT

Medium beast, unaligned

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 13 (2d8 + 4)

Speed 40 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	2 (-4)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages —

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Charge. If the goat moves at least 20 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a ram attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 12 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Sure-Footed. The goat has advantage on Strength and Dexterity saving throws made against effects that would knock it prone.

ACTIONS

Ram. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

MUD MEPHIT

Small elemental, neutral evil

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 27 (6d6 + 6)

Speed 20 ft., fly 20 ft., swim 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)	11 (+0)	7 (-2)

Skills Stealth +3

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Aquan, Terran

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Death Burst. When the mephit dies, it explodes in a burst of sticky mud. Each medium or smaller creature within 5 feet of it must succeed on a DC 11 Dexterity saving throw or be restrained until the end of the creature's next turn.

False Appearance. While the mephit remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from an ordinary mound of mud.

ACTIONS

Fists. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature.

Hit: 4 (1d6 + 1).

Mud Breath (Recharge 6). The mephit belches viscid mud onto one creature within 5 feet of it. If the target is Medium or smaller, it must succeed on a DC 11 Dexterity saving throw or be restrained for 1 minute. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

WINTER WOLF

Large monstrosity, neutral evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 75 (10d10 + 20)
Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	7 (-2)	12 (+1)	8 (-1)

Skills Perception +5, Stealth +3
Damage Immunities cold
Senses passive Perception 15
Languages Common, Giant, Winter Wolf
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Keen Hearing and Smell. The wolf has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Pack Tactics. The wolf has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the wolf's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

Snow Camouflage. The wolf has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide in snowy terrain.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Cold Breath (Recharge 5–6). The wolf exhales a blast of freezing wind in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw, taking 18 (4d8) cold damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

WOLF

Medium beast, unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	3 (-4)	12 (+1)	6 (-2)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +4
Senses passive Perception 14
Languages —
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Keen Hearing and Smell. The wolf has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Pack Tactics. The wolf has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the wolf's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d4 + 2) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 11 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

CHANNON'S WOLVES

These wolves deal an extra 3 (1d6) cold damage with their Bite attack.

WOOD WOAD

Medium plant, lawful neutral

Armor Class 18 (natural armor, shield)
Hit Points 75 (10d8 + 30)
Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	8 (-1)

Skills Athletics +7, Perception +4, Stealth +4
Damage Vulnerabilities fire
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14
Languages Sylvan
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Magic Club. In the wood woad's hand, its club is magical and deals 7 (3d4) extra damage (included in its attacks).

Plant Camouflage. The wood woad has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks it makes in any terrain with ample obscuring plant life.

Regeneration. The wood woad regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn if it is in contact with the ground. If the wood woad takes fire damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of the wood woad's next turn. The wood woad dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

Tree Stride. Once on each of its turns, the wood woad can use 10 feet of its movement to step magically into one living tree within 5 feet of it and emerge from a second living tree within 60 feet of it that it can see, appearing in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the second tree. Both trees must be Large or bigger.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The wood woad makes two attacks with its club.

Club. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (4d4 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

HANDOUT 1: THUUNLAKALAGA TALES

While sitting around the feast pit, several clan elders share tales of the past, and how they relate to current events. Have each player read and embellish one of these tales aloud (if necessary, players may read more than one tale):

- Elk Stalker tells of how they earned their name during the famine-stricken Year of Rotten Ice, by ranging far and wide to bring meat home to the clan. Players learn that times are hard for the clan; food is running low and there's little game to be found in the area.
- Moon Dancer tells about the Year of Invisible Death, when a marauding band of Reghed nomads picked off their livestock one by one under cover of darkness. They wonder if this might be the happening again, though it doesn't explain why some animals are left to rot in strange poses.
- Flintbeard tells a tale about the Year of Lost Souls, when three hunting parties went missing without a trace. One of the clan's hunting parties is currently overdue, and the clan is worried—not only for the hunters, but also for the much-needed game they're hopefully bringing home.
- Tusk-Carver tells a tale about the Year of the Enemy Within, when a feud between two families nearly tore the clan apart. This story clearly makes Old Goat uncomfortable.
- Clubfoot tells of the bitter cold during the Year of Frozen Toes, and how frostbite and “snow sleep” took the lives and limbs of many clan members. This winter is shaping up to be worse.

HANDOUT 2: DRAGONMAW SPRING



HANDOUT 3: WINDWHISPER'S JOURNAL

The book on the altar is primarily an almanac, detailing the comings and goings of the seasons, describing the region's animal populations and noting special events. Scrawled in the margins in an increasingly erratic hand, several notes stand out:

"... rockslide revealed a structure buried in the mountain."

"... the walls vibrate with power ..."

"... staff is whispering to me ..."

"... none of them understand. Everything is different now ..."

"... I can hear them! I can hear them all!"

"... they call me Feral-Tongue, and I have so many gifts to give them ..."

"... she's magnificent! I've named her Frostclaw ..."

"... must share this power with the beasts of the land ..."

"... standing stones! They'll keep the voices at bay ..."

"... failure at the stones, and now I feel Thuun's gaze upon me ..."

"... mud is watching me! Must not fall sleep ..."

"... guardian's stolen MY runestone! It's time I taught it a lesson ..."

(This is the final entry.)

HANDOUT 4: CHARACTER REWARDS

The characters may earn the following rewards in this adventure:

MAGIC ITEMS

POTION OF HEALING

Potion, common

You regain 2d4 + 2 hit points when you drink this potion. The potion's red liquid glimmers when agitated.

POTION OF WATER BREATHING

Potion, uncommon

You can breathe underwater for 1 hour after drinking this potion. Its cloudy green fluid smells of the sea and has a jellyfish-like bubble floating in it.

SENDING STONES

Wondrous item, uncommon

These stones were plucked from a raging river. Worn smooth by eons of fast-moving water, each is struck through with streaks of silvery metal and chunks of blue crystal, and engraved with a sigil of unknown origin.

Sending stones come in pairs, with each smooth stone carved to match the other so the pairing is easily recognized. While you touch one stone, you can use an action to cast the *sending* spell from it. The target is the bearer of the other stone. If no creature bears the other stone, you know that fact as soon as you use the stone and don't cast the spell.

Once *sending* is cast through the stones, they can't be used again until the next dawn. If one of the stones in a pair is destroyed, the other one becomes nonmagical.

STORY AWARDS

STORY AWARD: ON THIN ICE

You've damaged your relationship with someone in the Thuunlakalaga clan.

STORY AWARD: ONE MAN'S JUNK

You've caught the attention of a greedy mud mephit.

APPENDIX A:

DUNGEON MASTER TIPS

To DM an adventure, you must have 3 to 7 players—each with their own character within the adventure's level range (see Adventure Primer). Characters playing in a hardcover adventure may continue to play too, but if they play a different hardcover adventure, they can't return to the first if they level beyond its level range.

NEW TO D&D ADVENTURERS LEAGUE?

https://dnd.wizards.com/ddal_general

PREPARING THE ADVENTURE

Before you start play, consider the following:

- Read through the adventure, taking notes of anything you'd like to highlight or remind yourself of while running the adventure, such as a way you'd like to portray an NPC or a tactic you'd like to use in a combat. Familiarize yourself with the adventure's appendices and handouts.
- Gather any resources you'd like to use to aid you in running this adventure—such as notecards, a DM screen, miniatures, and battlemaps.
- Ask the players to provide you with relevant character information, such as name, race, class, and level; passive Wisdom (Perception) score, and anything the adventures specifies as notable (such as backgrounds, traits, and flaws).

Players can play an adventure they previously played as a player or DM, but may only play it once with a given character. Ensure each player has their character's adventure logsheet (if not, get one from the organizer) with their starting values for level, magic items, gold, and downtime days. These are updated at the conclusion of the session. The adventure information and your information are added at the end of the adventure session—whether they completed the adventure or not.

Each player is responsible for maintaining an accurate logsheet. If you have time, you can do a quick scan of a player's character sheet to ensure nothing looks out of order. If you see magic items of very high rarities or strange arrays of ability scores, you can ask players to provide documentation for the irregularities. If they can't, feel free to restrict item use or ask them to use a standard ability score array.

Point players to the *D&D Adventurers League Players Guide* for reference. If players wish to spend downtime days and it's the beginning of an adventure or episode, they can declare their activity and spend the days now, or they can do so at the end of the adventure or episode. Players should select their characters' spells and other daily options prior to the start of the adventure unless the adventure specifies otherwise. Feel free to reread the adventure description to help give players hints about what they might face.

NEW PLAYERS? NO PROBLEM!

With starter adventures like this one it's possible you may have players new to D&D, or just new to fifth edition. It's up to you as the DM to ensure they a) have fun with the game and b) learn the basics of how to play. At this level, having fun is more important than learning every rule exactly right. Be gentle with new players who make mistakes.

Make sure to keep your players smiling and rolling dice. Be positive and enthusiastic when describing the action, and you'll notice they quickly follow suit.

If you're a new DM, then welcome—and thank you! New DMs are the lifeblood of the D&D community. This adventure includes sidebars like this one that explain of some rules used as the adventure progresses!

ADJUSTING THIS ADVENTURE

To determine whether you should consider adjusting the adventure, add up the characters' levels and divide the total by the number of characters (rounding .5 or greater up; .4 or less down). This is the group's average party level (APL). To approximate the **party strength** for the adventure, consult the table below.

DETERMINING PARTY STRENGTH

Party Composition	Party Strength
3–4 characters, APL less than	Very Weak
3–4 characters, APL equivalent	Weak
3–4 characters, APL greater than	Average
5 characters, APL less than	Weak
5 characters, APL equivalent	Average
5 characters, APL greater than	Strong
6–7 characters, APL less than	Average
6–7 characters, APL equivalent	Strong
6–7 characters, APL greater than	Very Strong

SAFETY TOOLS

Safety tools ensure that players aren't pushed beyond their comfort levels. They let your players know you want them to have a positive experience.

A broad range of safety tools are available for you and your players online, but for more information reach out to your Event Organizer or to community@dndadventurersleague.org